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ABSTRACT

Experience and research have shown that writing workshops are an excellent tool for improving workers' writing skills. In the past 5 years, the emphasis of writing instruction has shifted from a focus primarily on handwriting, correct spelling, and simple reinforcement of skills to a focus on empowering students by emphasizing fluency and student decision-making in writing. In workplace settings, this has meant a shift to writing exercises that prompt employees who may be accustomed to positions of subordination to make decisions and act independently and creatively. The workshop environment has been shown to echo the goal of relating good writing skills to the workplace. The emphasis on content and exercising students' voices may seem to overlook the teaching of mechanics and grammar in workshop classes; however, experience has shown that grammar may not be a necessary element of adult writing instruction in workplace settings. (Attached to this document is a guide to conducting a 6-week workplace writing workshop. The six sessions feature a variety of exercises in which students gain practice in open and directed freewriting and in descriptive, creative, academic, and technical writing and in developing portfolios of their own writing.) (MN)

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The Writing Workshop

And the Adult Learner

Often, a division is drawn between classical education, which takes place in the university system, and technical education. The classical system teaches that which does not affect the temporal world--literature, philosophy, and letters. Technical education, conversely, teaches that which is applicable to industry and the work force, preparing students to assume their roles in a technologically advanced work environment. As this environment becomes increasingly centered around technology, technical education becomes more and more important, and the skills and concepts taught through literature and writing are relegated to the high school classroom. However, I would like to argue that one type of education does not necessarily preclude the other, and that many of the skills learned through writing can contribute not only to the enrichment of a workforce, but to its competitiveness, creativity, independence and problem-solving abilitites as well.

Experience and research shows that the writing workshop, conducted at the work site or

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through the technical college, is an excellent tool for capitalizing on the important benefits to be gained from strong writing skills.

Former Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole wrote in her article "America's Competitive Advantage: A Skilled Work Force" that "more and more, employers are relying on the skills of their workers to raise efficiency and quality, improve customer service, and develop new applications for existing products and services" (1989). This statement implies a description of the type of worker needed to answer the demands of the American industries. This worker should be capapble of independent thought, possess clear, effective communication skills, have confidence in his or her abilities, and be willing to make a personal committment and take an active role in ensuring the success of the company. In addition, Dole goes on to state that this "new kind of worker" will be one "with a broad set of basic workplace skills including creative thinking and problem solving abilitites, as well as reading, communication, and computation" skills (1989). These skills will help the worker adapt to the ever-increasing tide of new technology inundating the work place.

This emphasis on a broad base of skills extends beyond the workplace into education in general, and requires a restructuring of traditional curriculum. Beginning in 1988, the GED format began to include a 45 minute essay exam which is graded

"holistically and used in conjunction with a multiple choice section on revising and editing sentences in paragraph context to determine proficiency in writing" (Padak and Padak 1988). This change in the standard educational assessment requires a change in writing instruction. According to Padak and Padak, "the traditional method of teaching writing--where the teacher functions to convey information, answer specific questions, and grade papers--may no longer be sufficient" (1988). The change will require a writing curriculum which centers on student needs and interests. No longer can writing instruction focus "primarily on handwriting, correct spelling, and simple reinforcement of skills" (Padak and Padak 1988). The emphasis during the last five years has been on a change from skills related instruction to a process-oriented instruction which empowers students by giving them control and stressing their thoughts above the mechanics of writing.

The new approach focuses on "fluency and student decision-making in writing. That is, students write frequently about topics of their own choosing, attending to content before issues of form are addressed....decisions about changes in a piece of writing are the writer's to make" (Padak and Padak 1988). This methodology provides an opportunity for students to take charge and exercise independent thought, beginning to see their learning process and their environment as something over which they have contrtol. This attitude can be adapted to the work environment as well. Employees can, through participation in a

writing workshop, transfer this reliance on their own though processes to the job as well.

Writing develops independent critical thinking by requiring the writer to make a series of decisions during the writing process: "what to write about, what ideas about the topic to express, how to word particular thoughts, and so forth. Good writers make these decisions well, and their writing reflects the decisions they've made" (Padak and Padak 1988). In a workplace setting, writing exercises prompt employees who may be accustomed to a position of subordination to make decisions and act independently and creatively. Empowered by successful decision-making in a cognitive process, adult students can transfer their skills and confidence to the job as well.

The format for teaching these skills echoes the goal of relating good writing skills to the workplace. The workshop environment, according to Pate and Evans (1990), generates "the articulation of students' own voices reinforced by seeing themselves in print and the sharing of experience and problems possible in a group." In terms of an academic environment, workshops which rely on peer interaction "facilitate work at different levels," so that one instructor--often all that is available at a workplace site--can accomodate learners of varied backgrounds and abilities. Students in a workshop can see immediate success as a result of their efforts, and realize, through the reproduction of class work, that "they too can be published, that they can be writers" (1990). Most importantly, in a

workshop environment, "students [control] their own learning...an experience that can be transferred fruitfully to other learning" (1990).

Writing workshops are expecially effective for adult learners beause they allow the adult, who may have been out of a traditional school setting for many years, to emphasize "reawakening learners' self-confidence and self-esteem" (Pates and Evans 1990). In many studies in England concerning adult learners, "writing provided both a focus and a method for local groups to gather and work together" (1990). The building of self-confidence comes from the exercising of the students' vioce--they write about their lives and they are in charge; they are the experts and have a personal stake in the process. "Ownership is a crucial ingredient if students are to be empowered by their learning. When one is an expert on a particular subject, one has the power of that information; with that power comes confidence and self-esteem" (Stasz et al 1991).

The emphasis on content and the exercising of the student voice seems to overlook the teaching of mechanics and grammar in workshop classes. Grammar, however, may not be a necessary element of adult writing instruction, especially in a workplace setting. In my experience, while students respond well to being asked their opinion or write about their experiences, they are immediately alienated by grammar. Mechanics can be learned implicitly by hearing students read their work aloud, or through other reading exercises.

Theorists seem to agree with the de-emphasizing of grammar and mechanics, and claim that it should only be taught when "adults feel comfortable expressing themselves through writing" (Padak and Padak 1988).

The advent of word processing technology will facilitate this change from mechanics-based instruction to process-based instruction. Programs commonly available can correct spelling, analyze syntax and writing style, suggest areas of improvement, and pinpoint specific construction problems. By concentrating on the process of critical thinking and revision--the heart of the writing process--rather than grammar and mechanics which tend to alienate students, and by teaching writing in conjunction with computer-based instruction, students can become involved personally and assume ownership of the writing without sacrificing mechanical competency.

The writing curriculum that follows is intended to reintroduce students to writing techniques after an absence from a traditional classroom setting. The exercises and explanations included work toward developing "fluency and self-confidence in writing as a means of communication" (Padak and Padak 1989).

WRITE FOR LIFE:
INDIVIDUALIZING THE WRITING PROCESS

Carolyn Peelen
1993
PPG Learning Center

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:

This seminar is intended to break down the association between writing and school, or writing and work, and explore writing as it fits into all aspects of life. The participants will be able to become more comfortable with writing as they develop an image of themselves as writers, and discover their individual writing process.

The process of becoming comfortable with the written word involves experimentation--something with which many adult learners may be uncomfortable. To generate a willingness to experiment, the initial hours of the seminar are spent doing warm-up exercises, such as open and directed freewriting. These exercises give the student a chance to "babble" on the page; to write without the pressures of evaluation or production. While freewriting will remain an important element, later exercises, such as descriptive or narrative segments, will be written with the intent of being shared in a workshop or feedback group.

These exercises will lead toward the goal of developing confident, practical writing skills which can be adapted to writing tasks encountered at work, at home, or at school. However, since it is important that the individual find the process with which he or she is comfortable, the emphasis will be on the development of a writing process, rather than the completion of a specific task. Journals, process logs, and workshop groups will enable the students to reflect upon their progress as writers, as well as to listen and respond to the work of their peers.

The final sections of the seminar--those dealing with specific types of writing--will continue the emphasis on exploration and process-oriented writing. An explanation of basic terms is given for each of the topics covered, followed by exercises which will give the student the opportunity to experiment, but not necessarily produce a finished product. These exercises should also be shared in workshop groups, and saved in the student's portfolio, a folder in which the journals and in-class writing exercises will be collected. Any of the exercises can be expanded into an entire piece based on student interest.

Initial Assessment Questionnaire

The completion of the initial questionnaire as well as a diagnostic writing sample, will allow both the instructor and the student to assess his or her beginning writing process, and note progress at the completion of the course.

Diagnostic Sample: Assign a specific writing task, depending upon the composition of the class. For a class of mixed backgrounds, a suitable task would be:

> Describe your history as a writer. Where were your skills learned? What books have you read or do you enjoy reading? How comfortable are you as a writer?

15 minute time limit. These samples are to be collected and reviewed by the instructor.

Questionnaire

1. Where do you do the most writing? In what environment?

2. What kinds of materials do you enjoy reading? What authors do you consider to be good writers? Why?

3. In what areas of writing do you feel most comfortable? What are your strengths?

4. What areas would you like to improve?

5. If you are assigned a writing task, what steps do you take to complete it? (i.e. research, drafting, revising, editing, one draft only, etc.)

6. What do you hope to gain from this class?

7. Does any part of your job require writing skills? What kinds of writing tasks are you presented with at work?

8. How could stronger writing skills help you at work? Where could you use writing skills outside of a work environment?

ON-GOING WRITING SKILLS

1. **Journals**:

Journals are a good way to keep in practice for writing tasks. They are private, allowing the student to write freely, without worry about eventual grades, responses, or criticisms. Different from a diary, the journal goes beyond the simple recording of everyday events to the discussion of ideas and thoughts as well. Participants should write in their journals at least four times per week.

2. **Process Logs**:

A process log provides the student with the opportunity to reflect upon the experience of writing a particular piece or exercise. After each writing task, participants can monitor their progress as writers by taking five or 10 minutes to answer some of the following questions: What approach or attack strategy did you use for this task? What was difficult about it? What went well? What would you do differently? What did you try that was new?

3. **Workshop Groups**:

Peers are a great resource. Reading writing aloud to workshop group members will give participants the chance to hear their writing, as well as to get objective feedback about it. Often the connections between the thoughts expressed are clear to the author, but since people think more quickly than they write, those vital links may not be apparent to an objective reader. Workshop members should practice listening and taking notes at the same time, and, as a general rule, every member should generate at least one comment about each piece read. Workshops can have various aims:

1. **Sayback**: In this worshop, the group members merely repeat what they hear--the structure and the main points. This allows the author to hear what other people perceive as the main points of the paper.

2. **PQP** (Praise Question Polish): In this workshop, the members write one statement praising a specific section or quality of the paper, ask one question about an area they feel needs more information, and one point which could be polished or improved.

3. **Editing and Proofreading**: In this group, everyone brings a copy of their "final draft." These are given to another member of the group, who can correct grammar problems, question style usages, and offer feedback.

Week 1-2: Ice Breakers and Warm-ups

Exercise 1: Open Freewriting

Most of the writing we do everyday is for a specific purpose--a report or memo at work, an assignment at school, a note to a teacher or friend. There are, however, many benefits of learning to "loosen up" as you write; to write with no goal or aim. This kind of writing is called open freewriting, and is meant to generate ideas and explore connections between ideas. Free writing is often done as a warm-up for a writing exercise, or to overcome a case of "writer's block."

Open Freewriting directions:

Allow 15 minutes

1. Use a clean sheet of paper, and set a time limit. 10 minutes is good for starters.

2. Put your pen to the paper and begin to write whatever thoughts are in your mind. These can be random, unconnected, and nonsensical. If nothing comes to mind, write "Today is Wednesday, today is Wednesday (or whatever day it is)" until a new thought emerges. The idea is to write continuously and freely.

3. Explore connections between thoughts. How did you get from one point to the next? Wander freely, but keep thinking.

4. Keep your freewriting in your journal, and make an effort to spend at least 10 minutes freewriting every day.

Exercise 2: Directed Freewriting:

Directed, or prompted, freewriting, allows you to explore a particular topic fully, and with freedom from grammatical concerns. The prompts or directions can be given by the instructor, or you can set them for yourself. The goal is to explore the aspects of a topic fully, to determine what you know about the topic before you do research, and to generate ideas before attempting the actual writing of the essay, theme, or writing assignment.

The **Perl Process** and **Loop Process Writing** are two excellent examples of directed freewriting found in *A Community of Writers* by Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff. Other exercises include visualization and writing, and description.

Exercise 3: Descriptive Writing

Very often we say that a picture is worth a thousand words. The goal of descriptive writing is to present an image to the reader in clear detail--to make the reader see what you are describing, to smell it, feel it, or taste it. This goal can be accomplished through the use of adjectives, metaphors, similies, or other comparisons. As you complete the exercise below, try to use unique descriptive phrases, fresh comparisons, and original images. Write everything that comes to mind.

Visual image to verbal image:
Allow 30-35 minutes.

1. Take 2 or 3 minutes to recall and focus upon a memory from your childhood. Visualize the scene of the memory--what was going on, why you remember it, the smells and the sounds.

2. Using a marker or crayon, draw the scene in concrete detail. Include in your sketch everything that you recall about the memory.

3. On a separate piece of paper, transform that visual image into words. Add the depth of emotion and point of view, and write everything that comes to mind. Continue writing for at least 20 minutes.

4. Complete a process journal for this exercise. Describe what it feels like to draw, and the difficulties of putting that image into words. What did you enjoy about this exercise? What do you think went well?

Exercise 4: Creative and Descriptive Narrative

This exercise will require you to think creatively--to imagine a scene and narrate it to an audience. This can be a lot of fun, while building organization and arrangement skills. Do you describe the scene spatially? Logically? Do your events happen chronologically? How flexible can you be with time?

Retelling narrative poetry:
Allow 40 minutes.

1. Select a narrative poem (Robert Browning's poem "Prophyria's Lover" works especially well). The instructor or a class member will read the poem aloud slowly. The students are then asked to put the poem into prose.

2. You can retell the story as it is presented in the poem, or you may choose to write a sequel. Feel free to embellish or change the story as it suits your retelling.

3. Share your responses in workshop groups for the benefit of hearing your classmates' work, and to become comnfortable with reading your own work aloud.

4. Write a process log about this exercise. What did you try that was different? What did you hear in the work of your classmates that you could incorporate into your own future writing? What did you hear that did not work?

Week 3--Academic Writing

Academic writing is usually geared toward the completion of a specific assignment, and has as its primary goal the clear explanation of a single thesis. Because of its emphasis on clarity, it is important to approach an academic writing assignment with a plan. This plan is two-part. The first part is exploration with brainstorming and freewriting to determine what you already know about the topic, what questions you have, and how to attack the project. This step is vital to the development of a strong thesis, and an interesting paper.

The second step is putting the ideas you generate into a clear structure which will communicate your thesis to your reader, and develop the supporting ideas logically. There are many possible steps in this process, and no single formula will apply to all writing tasks. What follows is a sample writing process which can be used to approach an academic paper, and the steps of which can be modified to meet the needs of a specific assignment.

Brainstorming: Brainstorming can be done in many different ways, from listing and jotting notes to visual cues such as bubble diagramming. To create a **bubble diagram**, place your topic in a circle in the middle of a blank sheet of paper. In other bubbles connected to your main topic, write related topics, aspects of your topic, or other avenues to explore. Connected to each of these bubbles, continue to extend and expand possible areas of discussion under each new topic you generate.

Freewriting: You should at this point be familiar with the techniques of freewriting. Freewriting can either follow or incorporate brainstorming, and should futher the exploration of your topic.

Glossing: Glossing can be helpful during the initial production of the paper, or during the revision stage. Take the frewriting you produced in the previous step. Read it slowly, making a list on a separate piece of paper of all of the points you raise about your topic. This list does not have to be in complete sentences, nor do the points have to arranged in a logical order. To gloss an already completed draft, write one sentence for every paragraph in the paper. If there is more than one idea in a paragraph, list each idea separately.

Outlining: An outline works like a road map to your paper, letting you know where you are headed. Arrange the main points you want to include (possibly extracted by glossing your initial freewriting) in a logical manner, so that each point progresses

clearly from the preceding point. Under each of your main points, arrange your supporting arguments. Your outline should begin with an introduction to state your thesis and catch your reader's attention, and end with a conclusion. Although the thesis does not appear in the first paragraph in every case, the introduction should at least let your reader know what the paper is going to discuss. Use the outline to assist you during the drafting process.

Mapping: The introduction is often the most difficult part of the paper, and mapping is one way to ensure that your reader will get all of the information he or she will need. This technique consists of giving your reader a map of the paper in the introduction by stating the thesis and the main points of the paper in the order in which you will discuss them. Much like the table of contents in a textbook, a mapped introduction gives your reader a preview of the contents of the paper.

Drafting: Drafting is the actual process of writing the first draft of the paper. Assume that the first draft you produce will not be the final draft, and concentrate initially on getting all of your thoughts on paper in a logical manner. To make this easier, divide your paper into sections based on your outline, and work only on one section at a time. If at any point you "get stuck," return to the freewriting format until you overcome the problem.

Revising: Revision literally means "re-seeing." In order to revise your first draft, take a new look at the paper, and try to see it from another angle. Write it from a different point of view, or change the audience to see if you can gain new insight into your topic. Incorporate these insights into your revised draft. Depending upon your topic and your writing process, you may generate any number of revised drafts.

Editing: Once you have a draft with which you are satisfied, you are ready to edit the paper. Different from revising, editing does not change the content of the paper, only the wording. Read the paper aloud, and pay attention to the places where you have difficulty reading. Read for style, listening for repetitive sentence structures, awkward wordings, and unclear passages.

Proofreading: Proofreading is the final stage. Read the paper closely several times, checking for grammar and spelling errors, as well as typing errors. Since errors in our own work are hardest to see, ask a member of your workshop group to read the paper for you.

Week 4—Creative Writing

"Fiction writers are...thoughtful interpreters of the world" (Annie Dillard).

Creative writing, at its most basic level, is self-expression, and as such can take on limitless forms from fiction to poetry to drama to countless combinations of all three. Although seemingly infinite in its possibilities, there are several rudimentary considerations that beginning creative writers should explore and keep in mind.

1. **Form**: The forms in which authors define their expressions have been defined and redefined since the beginning of the literary tradition. Most of these definitions have been variations of the following basic literary forms:

   A. **Novel**: A long fictional prose work exploring in depth the lives and actions of its characters.

   B. **Short Story**: A short work which is more focussed in scope than the novel, and usually examining a single issue, question or character.

   C. **Poetry**: A greatly varying form including elements of rhyme, meter, and rhythm. Modern poetry does not necessarily follow any of the traditional forms, and occasionally can be distinguished from prose only by the length of the lines or arrangement on the page.

   D. **Drama**: A work of poetry or prose meant to be spoken or performed, consisting of dialogue and stage direction.

   E. **Expository writing**: A prose work of fiction, nonfiction or a combination of both which describes, explains, or reflects upon a particular subject.

2. **Plot**: The plot, which is a vital element of fiction, poetry, and drama, consists of **conflict** and **resolution**. The conflict pits the protagonist against another character, against natural forces, social forces, or against him or herself. The resolution is the settling of the conflict.

3. **Setting**: The location of the plot; where the story or events take place.

4. **Character**: The characters are the agents of the story. While flat, two-dimensional characters serve a purpose in fiction and poetry, the most memorable and believable characters are developed and round. They are not stereotypes or representatives, but individuals the author creates through description, action, and dialogue.

4. **Point of View**: The point of view is the perspective from which the story or poem is told. An **omniscient** narrator knows everything--what each character is thinking, and where everyone is at all times. A **first-person** narrator can account for only him or herself and his or her impressions of the world. A **second-person** narrator uses the pronoun "we" or "you." A **third-person** narrator uses the pronouns "he" or "she," but focuses on one character, describing the events of the plot from his or her perspective. Modern fiction often alters the point of view within the story to give another character's version, or tells each successive chapter from another viewpoint.

Creative Writing Exercises

Fiction:

Allow 30 minutes for each, or have students complete these exercises outside of class. All of these exercises should be shared in workshop groups.

1. Write a 1-2 page beginning for a short story given a scenario from the instructor, or one that the class creates as a whole.

2. Envision a character--either completely fictional or based on your experience--and compose a character sketch. Move beyond physical description to a description of the character's history, thoughts, and emotions.

3. Given a conflict proposed by the instructor, write the resolution to a short story.

4. Write a detailed description of a place, person, or event.

Drama:

Allow 30 minutes for each.

1. Write a dialogue between two characters given a situation from the instructor. Rewrite that dialogue, adding another character. How does the third character change the original scene?

2. Set a realistic stage setting for a play about. . .

3. Write a dialogue for the same scenario from two or three different points of view (a young child, an old man, a city dweller, a foreigner, etc.)

4. Read aloud in class passages from Shakespeare or a modern playwright to hear the dialogue and how the characters interact with one another. If time permits, act some of the passages out.

Poetry:

1. Have each student bring an interesting object to class, and place all objects in a place where all students can see them. The students should then pick an object to describe, and describe it first in prose, then in poetry. Experiment describing the

object with a rhyme scheme, and without.

2. Read poetry aloud in class that the students have brought in. Discuss why they selected the poems they did, what they found appealing, and what techniques they could try to incorporate into their own poetry.

3. For one week, keep your journal in poetry, recording your thoughts and experiences in poetry rather than prose. At the end of the week, write a process log about the feeling of writing in poetry.

Expository Writing :
Brainstorm to develop a specific topic involving reflection upon a past experience. In the writing of your essay, try to incorporate elements of both fiction and nonfiction, describing the experience in detail, and drawing some conclusions about it. Examples of this type of writing are Annie Dillard's *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, and Wallace Stegner's "Town Dump."

Week 5--Technical Writing:

Technical writing encompasses many different kinds of tasks, from computer manuals to business letters. Common to all of these tasks, however, is the goal of clarity. Technical writing needs to communicate a specific message clearly and effectively to its audience, whether that message be directions for assembling or operating a piece of machinery, an explanation of a billing charge, or an answer to an inquiry. Despite the variety of its applications, there are several basic considerations to keep in mind.

Audience: Most technical writing takes place at work in the form of memos, business letters, and operational manuals. Because of this specificity, the audience for the writing is clearly defined--memos are sent to the members of a certain department or committee, business letters are typically written to an individual, and instructional manuals affect only those operating certain machinery. Targeting your information to a specific audience enhances the effectiveness of your writing. Be personal, using "I" and "you" rather than "one." Give your reader all of the information he or she may need, but keep in mind the knowledge he or she may already have about the subject.

Clarity: The message you are trying to communicate through technical writing must come through clearly. Unlike fiction or poetry, where meaning can be disguised or embedded in the prose, technical writing exists to convey information readily. While complicated sentences and formal language may sound impressive, simple, direct writing will achieve this goal more easily. Mapping is also a helpful technique in technical writing, allowing you to clearly state your purpose for writing, and preview the contents of the correspondence. (Mapping is covered in the Academic Writing section of this seminar.)

Organization: The type of organization you use in technical writing will be determined by the task itself. For example, **linear**, or **chronological**, organization is used to describe events that happen sequentially, such as the history of a particular situation, or directions for assembling a machine. **Spatial** organization is used to describe objects that are not arranged along a straight line, such as the floor plans for a house, or the parts of a microscope. The organizational strategy that you choose should correspond with the object you are describing, the directions you are explaining, or the message you are communicating.

Technical Writing Exercises:

Allow 20 minutes for each.

1. Imagine a piece of machinery you use regularly on your job. Choose an organization which suits that piece of equipment, and describe it to a person who has never seen it or had contact with it. Describe it again, this time to another person in your department who is familiar with the machine and its uses. How did you alter your description to meet the needs of each audience?

2. Write a detailed set of directions for tying your shoe, or another daily activity that you can perform without thought. Exchange your directions with another class member, and try to follow the directions he or she has written. How would you change the directions of your classmates in order to make them more understandable? What changes did your classmates make in the directions you wrote? How does it feel to follow directions written by someone else?

3. Imagine a scenario you could encounter in your work environment, and write a letter of complaint to your company from the point of view of a consumer. After you have written the letter, exchange it with one of your classmates, and write a letter of response to the letter you receive.

4. Find an example of ineffective technical writing, revise it to make the message more clear, and share the sample and your revision with the class. What did the author do to detract from his or her message? What did you change to improve the sample? What are the most common errors discovered by the class?

Week 6--Conclusion and Review

Final Questionnaire:

By completing the final questionnaire, the students will have the chance to reflect upon their progress as writers during the course of this seminar, and analyze the areas of writing which they will pursue. These questionnaires need not be collected by the instructor, and the initial questionnaires can be returned to the students for comparison.

1. Describe yourself as a writer. With which type of writing do you feel most comfortable? Why? What are your strengths?

2. What areas of your writing would you like to improve?

3. If you are assigned a writing task, what steps do you take to complete it? How has your writing process changed? Which steps do you find most helpful?

4. What did you gain from this class? What would you like to know more about?

5. Where can you use your new writing skills? At work? At school? At home?

6. Do you enjoy writing? Why or why not?

Presentation of Portfolios:

After the final questionnaires have been completed, select one piece of writing you have done during the course of this seminar with which you feel most comfortable, or which shows the greatest improvement in your writing skills. Present this piece of writing to your workshop groups, or volunteer to be a "rotating author," reading the piece to each group in the class.

Every student should complete a final process log, reflecting on the seminar as a whole. In what areas did you feel strongest? Which parts were especially difficult for you? Which techniques or discoveries will you continue to use in your writing? Reflect and write for at least 20 minutes.